not been clearly indicated in the postal seal or mostly the seal is missing on postal letters;

(b) whether the Government are aware that there are delays in the prompt delivery of postal letters to the addresses; and

(c) if so, the step the Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Postal Seals and Stamps invariably bear the place and date of the office of posting/ delivery. However, complaints are occasionally received about non-affixing or illegible affixing of Postal Seals on Postal articles.

(b) The Postal articles are generallly delivered to the addressees on time. However, occasional delays in delivery of mail may occur due to unforseen transportation problems natural calamities, inadequacy of delivery staff, sudden and exceptionally heavy volume of mails like Corporate mail and Greeting mails etc.

(c) (i) Suitable instructions are issued from time to time to ensure proper stamping of mails. Surprise checks are made by the Senior Officers and corrective measured are taken as deemed necessary.

(ii) The transmission and delivery of mails is constantly monitored at various levels in the field and at the Headquarters also. Remedial steps are taken to curb deficiencies, wherever noticed.

Restriction of Companies

2493. SHRI SURESH KALMADI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Department of Telecommunications has decided to restrict the number of companies with whom orders can be placed for telecom equipment instead of distributing the contracts to all the bidders as has been earlier practice;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the names of the restricted companies?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following are the reasons:

(1) To obtain competitive and reasonable prices against tenders.

(2) To distribute the tendered quantity optimally so that orders are commercially viable both for the supplier and the purchaser i.e. Department of Telecom.

(3) The number of suppliers to be selected is invariably indicated in the bid documents for transparency in the procurement process.

(c) Only the number of companies is restricted. Restriction is not based on names. The number varies from tender to tender.

[Translation]

Introduction of Shatabdi Express Train Between Delhi and Amritsar

2494. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce one more Shatabdi Express Train between Delhi and Amritsar;

(b) whether an announcement was made by the Prime Minister in this regard during his Punjab tour; and

(c) if so, the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) It has been decided to introduce a reverse Shatabdi Express between New Delhi and Amritsar from 02.10.97.

Renewable Energy Centres

2495. SHRI D.P. YADAV : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) the areas in Uttar Pradesh where the Government have set up renewable energy centres;

(b) the details of the projects of non-conventional energy sources which are proposed to be set up in Uttar Pradesh through Panchayats; and

(c) the details of the estimated annual expenditure thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (CAPT. JAI NARAIN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) One Regional Training-cum R&D Centre under Integrated Rural Energy Programme, at Chinhat, Lucknow and two Biomass Production Research Centres located at National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow and Garhal University, Srinagar respectively, have been set up with financial support from the Ministry.

(b) and (c) State Governments have been advised to involve the Panchayats in the implementation of National Programme on Improved Chulha. In turn, State Government or Uttar Pradesh has issued suitable instructions to District and Block Nodal Offices in this regard. An expenditure of

Rs. 126 lakhs is estimated for the programme of installation of 2.30 lakhs improved chulhas in Uttar Pradesh, during 1997-98.

[English]

Pending Railway Projects

2496. SHRI RAJABHAU THAKRE :
SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH :
DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR :
SHRI DEVI BUX SINGH :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the railway projects lying pending in the country, State/zone-wise;

(b) since when each of these projects are pending;

(c) the reasons for delay; and

(d) the steps taken/to be taken to expedite clearance of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) A statement is attached.

(b) These works were included in the Budget 1997-1998 with the proviso that the work would be taken up after obtaining necessary clearances. The clearances are still awaited.

(c) The survey reports are first examined in this Ministry and sent to the Planning Commission for appraisal. Thereafter projects are considered by the Expanded Board and CCEA. This procedure is time consuming.

(d) The clearance of the pending projects is being closely monitored and out of the total of 25 pending projects, 9 have been referred to CCEA and 8 have been sent to Planning Commission so far. For the balance projects, the reports are under examination and are likely to be sent to Planning Commission shortly.

Statement

Sl. No.	Rly.	State	Name of Work
1	2	3	4
1.	CR	Maharashtra	Kipergaon-Shirdi-New Line
2.	CR	Maharashtra	Baramati-Lonad New Line
3.	CR	Madhya Pradesh	Lalitpur-Satna, Rewa-Singrauli and Mahoba-Khajuraho-New Line
4.	ER	Bihar	Giridih-Koderma-New Line
5.	ER	Bihar	Ganga bridge near Patna
6.	NE	Bihar	Jaynagar-Darbhanga-Narkatiaganj-Gauge Conversion
7.	NE	Bihar	Samastipur-Khagaria-Gauge Conversion
8.	NR	Rajasthan	Sarupsar-Ganganagar Canal loop Phase-I Gauge Conversion
9.	NR	Punjab	Taran Taran-Goindwal-New Line
10.	NR	Punjab	Chandigarh-Ludhiana New Line
11.	NR	Haryana/Raj.	Rewari-Sadulpur Gauge Conversion
12.	NR	Rajasthan	Luni-Munabao Gauge Conversion
13.	NFR	Assam/ Nagaland/Manipur	Diphu-Karong-New Line
14.	NFR	West Bengal/Assam	New Jalpaiguri-Siliguri-New Bongaigaon-Gauge Conversion
15.	NFR	Assam	Bogibeel Bridge
16.	SR	A.P.	Dharmavaram-Pendukonda-New Line
17.	SR	Karnataka	Yeswantpur-Tumkur-Doubling
18.	SR	Karnataka	Bangalore-Satyamangalam-New Line
19.	SR	Karnataka	Mysore-Chamrajnagar-Gauge Conversion
20.	SR	Karnataka	Bangalore-Krishanrajpuram-Doubing
21.	SR	Tamil Nadu	Villupuram-Pondicherry-Gauge Conversion
22.	SR	Kerala	Angamali-Sabarimala-New Line
23.	SR	Kerala/Tamil Nadu	Quilon-Tenkasi-Virudnagar-Gauge Conversion
24.	SCR	AP/Maharashtra	Secunderabad-Mudkhed and Jankampet-Bodhan-Gauge Conversion
25.	SER	Orissa/AP	Naupada-Gunupur-Gauge Conversion